

## SINGAPORE

### Confrontation Anniversary

In the announcement, a year ago, of his schedule for "crushing Malaysia"—"by the time the cock crows on January 1, 1965"—Sukarno was optimistic. However, the Indonesian objective remains fixed, and the "confrontation" has reached the stage of de facto, if still limited, war. A combined Malaysian-British-Australian command is on active war footing. Operations are continuous in Borneo, where Indonesia has recently conducted a large

# Abroad

amphibious exercise led by the Russian-built cruiser *Irian*. Naval clashes in or near the Strait of Malacca are an almost nightly occurrence. During 1964 more than a thousand Indonesians are known to have landed or parachuted on the Malaysian coast, of whom 300 were killed and 400 captured. In the terminology of the allied staff, Indonesian warcraft are called "skunks"; Indonesian planes are "bandits"; and the Indonesian units are designated "enemy."

## LONDON

### Let's All Do Good

A columnist of the left-wing *New Statesman* pointed with pride to one little-noticed effect of Labor's taking over the government: "Most of the reformist movements . . . seem to have lost to the government either a chairman or a valued committee member. Flourishing limbs have thus been lopped off the National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, the Howard League, the Albany Trust, the New Bridge, the Josephine Butler Society and the Prison Reform Council, to name only a few. Letters of congratulatory regret have been flowing into ministers' offices. The punctilio with which the ministers have been replying must have added massively to the burden of their first weeks in office. . . . No doubt all these movements can comfort themselves with the thought that in losing an active MP they have acquired a powerful friend at court. But the thought that occurs to me, obvious perhaps but heart-warming, is that no Tory government has ever built itself, or ever will, from such socially active elements as these."

## PARIS

### The New Masters

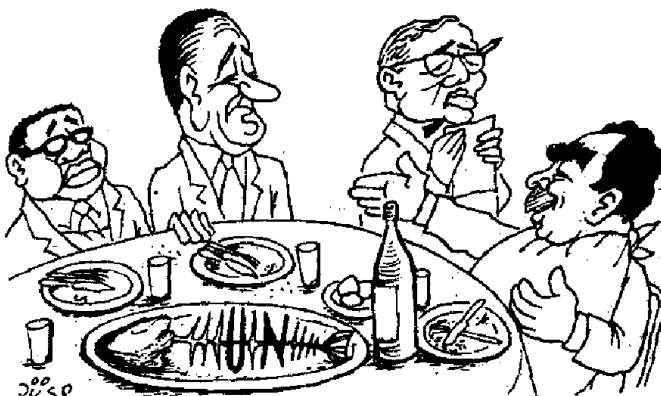
For 24 hours, on December 11, twelve little-known men—none of them holding political office—were the masters of France. They comprised the combined command—uniting the Communist, Socialist, Catholic and independent unions—of the electricity and gas sector of the general strike of all state industries. The railroad sector was routine: all movement simply ended, one hundred per cent. But a hundred per cent shutdown of electricity would wreck a modern nation, and cause thousands of casualties. The electricity-gas command had therefore the delicate problem of cutting power down to the point where no fac-

tories, offices, subways etc. could function, and where most houses and apartments were without light or heat, but at the same time keeping power plants going on a minimum basis to permit current to keep flowing where (e.g., in laboratories, iron lungs) cutoff would mean irreparable damage, and to be switched on for a surgical operation or other emergency. This highly technical task, requiring the total discipline of the entire work force, could be understood and directed only by what the French call the "cadres" (supervisory, advanced technical and administrative personnel). The December 11 strike was the first great social action in which the cadres were decisive. Their unlimited political potential, implicit in this strike, has not escaped de Gaulle's notice.

## EDINBURGH

### Self Reliance

The High Court expressed some regret in being compelled to sentence James Steele, aged 80, to jail, after he had pleaded Guilty to the charge of counterfeiting 14,144 two-shilling pieces over a period of more than six years. After an accident in 1955, Steele had to retire from his job in a foundry. His pension was not enough to live on, but he could not bring himself to apply for supplementary welfare. He therefore turned to counterfeiting in order to bring his income to a subsistence level. From Imperial



Jusp. Wir Bruckebauer, Switzerland

Ben Roth Agency

**Brezhnev: "Give the check to the gentleman . . ."**

Chemical he bought silver strips for ten shillings each, out of which he was able to make 40 "well nigh perfect two-shilling pieces," according to the evidence. "Specimens of the counterfeit coins," the Crown Prosecutor, Mr. F. W. F. O'Brien, declared, "were sent to the Royal Mint and the chief assayer has reported that they are of excellent quality produced by an expert craftsman which would easily deceive the public and the banking institutions. No counterfeits of this standard had been submitted to the Mint in the course of years." The Court asked whether the offense could be described as another form of inflation, but Mr. O'Brien replied that "in fairness to the accused he could not be charged with any responsibility for inflationary tendencies."

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